

# Hammerstrom's

for the people  
in the 17th Senate District

# Hotline



State Senator  
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**SNOWMOBILE RIDERS ENCOURAGED TO MAKE SAFETY A PRIORITY** As Michigan residents pull their snowmobiles out of storage, they are reminded to use caution while enjoying the more than 6,100 miles of designated snowmobile trails throughout the state. Last year, 46 people were killed in snowmobile accidents, many due to unsafe procedures. Alcohol was involved in 22 of the incidents, while excessive speed was listed as a causing factor in 75 percent of the accidents. Before heading out, snowmobile riders should dress appropriately and know the rules and weather conditions. State law requires riders to wear a U.S. Department of Transportation-approved crash helmet. Other safety practices include slowing down on the trails, never riding alone, not traveling across frozen water, and not drinking alcohol before or while riding. In addition, leave a travel plan with someone, including your destination and timetable, in case of emergencies.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Michigan is one of only three states with a large system of interconnected snowmobile trails, located in six state forests, three national forests, and many acres of privately owned lands.

**PREVENTION IS KEY TO FIGHTING CERVICAL CANCER** January has been designated by many organizations as Cervical Cancer Screening Month. Approximately 12,200 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year in the United States. Although the survival rate is higher than in past years, approximately 4,100 women are still dying annually. Since cervical cancer is the most preventable type of cancer, this is the first time ever we are able to essentially stop the disease before it starts. The only way we can effectively do this is through educating women and encouraging them to discuss the issue with their doctors. As part of a national *Challenge to Eliminate Cervical Cancer* campaign, I intend to introduce legislation to establish a task force to raise public awareness of the disease. The main goal of the task force will be to identify ways state officials can facilitate better education about cervical cancer and screening programs for Michigan women, particularly for underserved women. According to recent studies, the number of women who have been screened is lower among those with lower income levels and the uninsured. For more information about cervical cancer, including current statistics and links to organizations such as the American Cancer Society, please visit my website at: [www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom).

**LEGISLATURE FIGHTS INVASIVE SPECIES** As a result of legislation I sponsored, owning certain exotic species of fish, such as silver and bighead carp, is now considered a felony. Public Acts 269 and 270 of 2003, recently approved by the Governor, also prohibit releasing non-native fish in Michigan waters and address aquatic nuisances, such as genetically engineered and foreign fish species. Non-native fish carry exotic diseases and parasites and pose a major threat to the health of the Great Lakes basin and its natural habitat. Efforts to raise public awareness concerning aquatic nuisances increased in 1988, with the discovery of zebra mussels in Lake St. Clair. An estimated 140 exotic species, including the sea lamprey and round goby, have made their way into the Great Lakes through the downstream flow of water caused by commercial and recreational boat traffic.

**MICHIGAN ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR REGISTRY** Michigan law authorizes the Secretary of State's Office to help build the Organ and Tissue Donor Registry, a confidential, computerized database that documents your wishes regarding organ donation. Hospital staff has access to the donor registry around the clock, making verification easy and timely. Currently, Michigan law does not require family consent to carry out your wishes to be an organ donor. However, discussing your wishes with your family will help keep everyone informed, avoiding any confusion or delays. Other methods of designating your wishes under Michigan law include signing the back of your driver's license, designating a patient advocate, and documenting your wishes in a will. For more information about the Organ and Tissue Donor Registry, please visit the Secretary of State's website at [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos), or call my office, toll-free, at 1-888-477-8238.

You can read future issues of Hammerstrom's Hotline on my website at [www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom/news/Hotline.htm](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom/news/Hotline.htm).